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PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS, 1875 TO 1936

REPORT

ON THE

SANITARY CONDITION

OF THE

BRADFORD-ON-AVON URBAN DISTRICT

FOR THE YEAR 1947

PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL BY

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Medical Officer of Health
of the Bradford-on-Avon Urban Sanitary Authority

MASSEY, TROWBRIDGE

Annual Report of Medical Officer

BRADFORD-ON-AVON URBAN DISTRICT

——— : : ———

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Area—2,005 acres.
Population—5,088 (estimated).
Number of Inhabited Houses—1,558.
Rateable Value—£24,649.
Sum represented by Penny Rate—£100 : 17 : 9d.

Social Conditions

The Rubber Works, the main industry in the town, was still working to capacity, and the several smaller works—a 'Precision' (small parts) factory, a factory for the manufacture of small engines, and a cabinet maker, still function and give employment both to workers from other districts and local people.

VITAL STATISTICS

	M.	F.	Total.
Live Births	57	50	107
Legitimate	51	48	99
Illegitimate	6	2	8
Still Births	1	1	2
Legitimate	0	1	1
Illegitimate	1	0	1
Deaths of Infants under 1 year	3	2	5
Legitimate	3	1	4
Illegitimate	0	1	1
Deaths of Infants under 2 years			
From Diarrhoea and Enteritis	0	0	0
Deaths (from All Causes) ...	37	34	71

BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

		Compare.
Live Birth Rate :— 22·03 per 1,000 population	England & Wales	20·5
Still Birth Rate :— 0·39 per 1,000 population	,, ,,	0·5
Death Rate Infants under 1 year :— 37·39 per 1,000 live births	,, ,,	41·0
Death Rate Infants under 2 years from Diarrhoea and Enteritis :— 0 per 1,000 live births	,, ,,	5·8
Death Rate :— 13·95 per 1,000 population	,, ,,	12·0

ANALYSIS OF DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES

	M.	F.	Total.
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers ...	0	0	0
Cerebro-spinal Fever	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	0	0	0
Whooping Cough	0	0	0
Diphtheria	0	0	0
Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System	1	0	1
Other Forms of Tuberculosis ...	0	0	0
Syphilitic Diseases	0	0	0
Influenza	0	0	0
Measles	0	0	0
Acute Polio-myelitis and Polio-encephalitis	0	0	0
Acute Infective Encephalitis ...	0	0	0
Cancer of Buceal Cavity : Oesophagus (M); Uterus (F)	1	1	2
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	0	0	0
Cancer of Breast	0	1	1
Cancer of all other sites	4	2	6
Diabetes	0	0	0
Intracranial Vascular Lesions ...	3	6	9

	M.	F.	Total.
Heart Disease	17	9	26
Other Diseases of the Circulatory System	1	0	1
Bronchitis	1	0	1
Pneumonia	2	4	6
Other Respiratory Diseases ...	0	1	1
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum ...	0	0	0
Diarrhoea, under 2 years	0	0	0
Appendicitis	2	0	2
Other Digestive Diseases	0	4	4
Nephritis	0	0	0
Puerperal and Post Abortion Sepsis	0	0	0
Other Maternal Causes	0	0	0
Premature Birth	1	0	1
Congenital Malprivations; Birth Injury and Infantile Diseases ...	1	0	1
Suicide	0	0	0
Road Traffic Accidents	0	0	0
Other Violent Causes	2	1	3
All Other Causes	1	5	6
Total	37	34	71

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

I. **Staff.** (i) One part-time Medical Officer (a full-time Public Health Officer who acts for 2 other districts, and is also an Assistant County Medical Officer).

(ii) One Sanitary Inspector who is also the Surveyor.

The Sanitary Inspector left the service of the Council in September, 1947, and no new appointment had been made by the end of the year. The duties of Sanitary Inspector have been carried out as required by the officers of neighbouring authorities, through the courtesy of the Councils concerned.

II. (a) **Laboratory Facilities**

Dr. Douglas Thornton, the County Pathologist, Salisbury General Infirmary; Messrs. Waterfall & O'Brien, Bristol.

N.B.—All swabs, etc., collected from the 5.30 p.m. 'bus at Salisbury. Other 'buses or trains met on receipt of a telephone message.

(b) **Ambulance Facilities**

No change.

(c) **Nursing in the Home**

There are two local District Nurses—one general, one midwife.

(d) **Treatment Centres and Clinics**

A Child Welfare Clinic is held in the Old Church House on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. I attend on the 1st Tuesday; the County full-time Health Visitor with the assistance of two local nurses attends both times.

(e) **Hospital Accommodation and Maternity Homes**

During the year, the Maternity Hospital at Berryfield House and the Ante-Natal Clinic at Woolley Grange continued to be used for Wiltshire patients, under the administration of the Wilts County Council. The local committee commenced the carrying out of necessary alterations to enable Leigh House to be converted to a small hospital for the treatment of patients from Bradford-on-Avon and District. The Hostel at Conigre House for children, continued to be administered by the Wilts County Council.

SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Water Supply

During the year the Council submitted a scheme to the Ministry for the carrying out of works to improve the water supply to the higher level areas of the town and to construct a new reservoir. A local inquiry into these proposals was held. Following an adverse report by the Inspector upon the condition of the waterworks pumping station at Avoncliff, steps were taken to put the pumping station in order, and by the end of the year there had been an improvement in such conditions. Approval was received to the laying of new mains and provision of a new booster station in order to improve the water supply in the higher

level areas, but the Ministry deferred for twelve months consideration of the scheme for the construction of a new reservoir, and suggested that the Council should consider the purchase of water in bulk from the Chippenham source, through the Bradford and Melksham Rural District Council.

Analyses

Several excellent analyses were received, but there were occasional indications of very slight pollution by coli aerogenes group.

Type of Supply

I. **Rivers and Streams**

There has been no necessity for action to prevent pollution in the district.

II. (1) **Closet Accommodation**

A few houses on the outlying portion of the town only have other than water-closets.

(2) **Public Cleansing**

The work is carried out by the Council's employees.

III. **Sewage Disposal**

There has been no extension of the sewerage system, and the Sewage Works continued to function satisfactorily.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Notifications corrected and arranged for Sex and Age

Age Group	Scarlet Fever		Measles	
	M	F	M	F
0	0	0	4	1
1	0	0	23	14
3	3	0	19	17
5	2	1	33	46
10	1	1	2	0
15	0	1	1	1
25 and over	0	0	1	2
Age unknown	0	0	0	0
TOTALS ...	3	3	83	81

Age Group	Pneumonia		Erysipelas		Puerperal Pyrexias
	M	F	M	F	
0	0	0	0	0	
5	0	0	0	0	
15	0	0	0	0	
45	1	0	1	0	
65 and over	0	0	0	0	
Age unknown	0	0	0	0	2
TOTALS ...	1	0	1	0	2

As in other years, the cases of Scarlet Fever were mild ones, several of which were nursed at home. The Measles cases occurred in the first 3 quarters of the year, stopping abruptly in the holiday period.

Diphtheria Immunisation

This continued to be carried out by the County Council, their special officer appointed for this work visiting the schools at intervals. In future, the original first immunisation of children under school age will be carried on at the Child Welfare Clinic, Church House, on the 1st Tuesday in each month, by myself. The re-immunisation of school children will be started as soon as practicable.

It is hoped that in future the number of children immunised will approximate much more to the number of children born. The most far-seeing parents do not wait to be informed about it, but ask for it: many of the others come forward after persuasion by the Nurse, but there are still some who prefer not to accept the offer to safeguard their children, and thus help to safeguard all other children.

The table given below has been supplied by the County Medical Officer.

IMMUNISATION IN RELATION TO CHILD POPULATION.

Number of children who had completed a full course of Immunisation at any time up to 31st December, 1947.

Age at 31st December, 1947	Under 1	1	2	3	4	5 to 9	10 to 14	Total under 15
i.e., born in year ..	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1938-42	1933-37	
Number Immunised ...	2	33	30	41	34	201	190	531
Estimated Mid-Year Population 1947 ...	434					682		1116

HOUSING

The following work has been carried out by the Council :—

I. **Temporary Houses**

The 20 Temporary Houses on the Ashley Road Site were completed during the year, and were duly occupied.

II. **Permanent**

" Churches' " Site. Owing to the very bad weather experienced during the 1946-47 winter, work on this site was slowed up, and has since been disappointingly slow. No houses have been completed during the year.

There is nothing further to report regarding the other sites.

As so many of the old houses in the town, already pre-war far below the housing standards, are suffering from a further 9 years' use, it is hoped that the new housing plans will go ahead. Bradford-on-Avon, being a picturesque historic town built on a steep rocky hillside, offers many difficulties in the improvement of existing houses. In certain cases in the past where persons have been willing to discount the difficulties in favour of the view and sunshine, quite desirable little houses for single people have been made from the old cottages : at the expense of those willing to live in them. The problem of making them conform to the standards laid down by the Housing Act " at reasonable expense " is almost insuperable. Many of them are built with at least 2 storeys against the rock, making through ventilation an impossibility. Lack of space inside the houses (some of them have ' cave-like ' kitchens actually sunk into the rockface) and low ceilings make the conversion of them internally almost impossible.

JEAN MURRAY.

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR

The Sanitary Inspector left the service of the Council in early September, and no successor was appointed by the end of the year.

It is regretted that the usual Report of the Sanitary Inspector cannot be furnished.